1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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keep off the water'.[1] The Maria cloak is made from long, thin strips of the bark of the *wara marra* (*Kydia calycina*); when this bark has been well retted in a stream it is pounded, and the long strips peel off like blades of a broad dry grass. They are gathered round the neck into a close plaited yoke over twine strings used for tying it in front, under the chin, and the ends hang loose. It is known as *tarali* to the Bison-horn Marias, some of the remoter of whom also use it. Besides these, the Hill Maria has a large hat of a very flat conical shape, like the Annamese headgear, made of leaves on a bamboo framework, called *reking* (it is almost an umbrella, with the head used as the stick, rather than a hat), and a similar leaf waterproof shield called *deda'ixo* for his back and shoulders, in shape like an elongated winnowing fan, or an English dustpan, the enclosed end resting on his shoulders. Similar rain-hats and shields are worn by Gonds and others in various parts of the Central Provinces, though the Maria shapes are distinctive.

292 [824]

The account in paragraph 87 of Glasfurd's report obviously refers more to the Marias living 'in the wilder and more unfrequented parts, such as among the valleys of the Baila Deelas and towards the Indrawutty and Kootroo Talook' than to the Bison-horn Marias of the Jagdalpur and Dantewara plateaux; the description which follows the words quoted applies far more to the Hill Maria styles of dress and ornamentation than to those in vogue among the Bison-horn Marias either now, or when the *Gazetteer* was prepared in 1907-9, or at the time of certain earlier photographs taken at the end of the nineties when Colonel Fagan was administering the State. Even so far as Glasfurd's remarks apply to Kutru and the Indrawati valley, they strengthen the contention already advanced in this book of the steady spread of Bison-horn culture among villages in the valley once Hill Maria in culture. He notes, however, that towards Bhopalpatnam and Bijapur the Bison-horn Marias are better clad, but gives no details.

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Dress and ornaments: (b) Bison-horn Maria

Their loin-cloth is more ample than that worn in the Abujhmar, and, except when girded up for hunting or work in jungle and field, completely covers their buttocks. It is gathered up into a knot just below the navel, and usually a fold is left, varying in length, to hang down over the piece that has, as with the Hill Marias, been passed tightly over their private parts and between their legs. There is no *toqa* or tail behind, consequently, as in the Abujhmar. Towards the Godavari valley the front flap gets very long. The Bison-horn Maria of to-day often wears a mill-made singlet of cotton mesh or gauze, or a '*waskat*', and a coat of some cheap

[1] J. H. Hutton, *The Angami Nagas*, p. 26.

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use very powerful staves of *dhaman* (*Grewia tiliaefolia*) wood, the bow when strung measuring 6 feet from horn to horn. Of the Hill Maria staves measured by me, the thickest circumference varied from 6·5 to 9 cm. All the bows which I have seen are plain bows, used for spear-arrows and club-arrows; I have never seen any compound, composite or pellet bows. The back of the stave is the natural curved exterior of the bamboo; the belly is pared flat. The string is a carefully sliced piece of the outside of a green bamboo cut with a portion of the natural knots at each end trimmed into knobs, round which loops of twine[1] made from the fibre of the *siari* (*Bauhinia vahlii*) creeper are tied in notches (*kiddi* in both dialects) 25 to 40 mm. from the tips of the horns. One loop is permanently bound to the notch of the lower horn, the free loop being only sprung into the upper notch when the bowman strings the bow by resting the lower horn on the ground and bending the stave by holding his knee in its belly and pulling the upper horn towards him. The *lower* horn is called *modol* or *talla*, i.e. head, and the *upper* horn *kodi* ('point') or *toga* ('tail').

In the Abujhmar mountains the longest bowstring which I measured was 135 cm. from notch to notch, and the shortest, a child's bow, 110 cm. The greatest distance from the belly of the stave to the string of a bow strung but not drawn was 10 cm.

Arrows are called *handi* by the Hill and *kar* by the Bison-horn Marias; this refers to spear-arrows only. *Kar* strictly means the arrow-head only, the Bison-horn Marias having no separate word for the whole arrow. The other terms used are:—

Term	Hill Maria	Bison-horn Maria
Arrow-head	*kani*	*kar*
Barb	*kewu*	*kew*
Shaft	*kand-meri*	*kara*
Shaft-nock	*ihsal*	*pissl*
Feathering	*kand-toqoshu*	*kar-gerring*
Club-arrow	*bito*	*mitom-kara*
Head of club-arrow	*bonka*	*mitom*

The Hill Maria spear-arrows have a total length of 56 to 59 cm., that of their club-arrows varying from 51 to 64 cm. The Bison-horn arrows are longer in shaft and head, like their bows. Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4, Figure 2, on page 86, are full-size representations of typical Abujhmar arrow-heads. The wings curve convexly or concavely from point to tips of barbs. The Bison-horn Maria arrows are similar in shape, but are far larger, often measuring 15 cm. or more from the point of the blade to the head of the tang, have longer barbs, and are therefore slenderer in both blade and barb. All

[1] Used in the technical sense of the word.

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343 231 other minor grains. Where timber is not available, these sties are made from bamboos, or even from stones. Similar but, of course, far smaller structures are made to serve as hen-coops, resting generally against the side or front of the houses.

778 361 [824] The shrine of the Village Mother, as has been stated above, is sometimes actually inside the village dormitory, sometimes just outside it, and sometimes at a considerable distance from the actual village, in a grove, if possible of *saja* (*Terminalia tomentosa*—everywhere the sacred tree of the Gond) trees. Sometimes there is also in the village, often at the end of the street opposite the dormitory, the hut-temple of the *pen* or clan-god, containing the log-frame image of the god. This will normally be found only in the village of the *pen-wadda'i* or priest of the clan-god; but sometimes, where the villages of the clan are far apart, there may be two copies of the clan-god, or the god may go to visit other villages, and have a resting-shed in each; or he may have begotten a son to deputize for him in the distant village; I have seen in a *pen-rawar* (clan-god's temple) both the *pen* himself and an embryo 'son' in the second of his three years' 'gestation'. The *pen* is always covered by a shed; but the Village Mother sometimes is just a cairn or a basket-cylinder filled with stones, or a low table-stone at the foot of a *saja* tree, and close by there is a small shed of grass thatch with open sides in which are kept the cooking pots, ladles and sacrificial knife used at ceremonial feasts. The sacred grove may in very rare cases, in villages near the edge of the lowlands, have also a hut-temple of Danteshwari Mai or Maolai, the most revered or feared Hindu deities of Bastar.

343 841 There will be found well apart from the houses and the rest of the village a menstruation hut in many villages, known as *pedawo'-gha'i* to the Hill Marias, or sometimes as *dola-lon*. Here all menstruating women are secluded from the village for a week every month. Sometimes the hut has a single room, about 6 by 5 feet, with walls 3 feet high, with no windows and only a small door little bigger than the entrance to an English kennel; sometimes there are two rooms separated from each other by a partition, so that when a girl is afraid of being secluded by herself a duenna may sleep within sound of her without actual contact. The door of the seclusion room always opens away from the village, so that the affected woman may get out at night to answer the call of nature without overlooking the village or being visible to any villager. Special cooking pots and utensils are kept in the seclusion room, or else the woman's food is cooked outside and left by her door for her. [789 824] The roof is often covered with seed-bearing twigs of castor-oil plants, in all parts of India regarded as very efficacious against magic.

[text continues on p. 106]

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platform raised above the ground on wooden legs about 3 feet high, and consisting of a rectangular wooden frame from 5 to 7 feet long by from 5 to 3 feet broad; no attempt has been made to draw to scale those shown in the three house plans. On this frame is a framework of criss-cross strips of bamboo bark or *siari* (*Bauhinia vahlii*) creeper cords. In dry weather the father and children sleep on the floor, with possibly a reed sleeping-mat (*masni*) or a bark-cloak (*taghali*) beneath them, and a fire near by; in the rainy season they sleep on the *alpanji* platform, with a fire underneath them. At other times of year it is a convenient shelf for storing baskets and basketry materials, winnows, tools, cords, etc. Where, as in the Kurmer house illustrated, there is no *agha*, the husband may sleep on the floor of the veranda in dry weather, and in wet weather on a sleeping-mat in the *angadi*, while the wife sleeps on the floor of the *lonu*.

The *angadi* is primarily the kitchen and secondarily the sleeping room of the wife and any mature daughter. Besides one or more hearths (*o'idal*) of baked mud, roughly horseshoe shaped, or consisting of three stones, there are one or more mortar holes (*ahki*) sunk in the floor and carefully plastered with mud in which grain is pounded with the club-shaped pestle (*uspal*), and numerous pots or gourd bottles of water, supplies of leaves for leaf-plates, bamboo splinters for stitching them together and baskets of all shapes and sizes. It is taboo for mature women to sleep anywhere except on the floor, and so no *alpanji* is provided in *angadi* or *hala* room. Actually the original custom, still followed in some remote villages, seems to have been for all men to sleep in the village dormitory, or at least under their granaries, and not in the house, save in the season when they slept in the fields; for this reason the Kurmer house without any *agha* probably is an older type than the Handawada. At present, except during the season when all males are sleeping in the field houses, married men as well as bachelors sleep in the village dormitory whenever sexual continence has to be observed, e.g. from the night before the sowing of the *penda* fields till the first blades sprout, and before certain ceremonies.[1] The Hill Marias are still doubtful about the propriety of men sleeping in the house and regard the jungle or some place overshadowed by the thick leaves of the *siari* (*Bauhinia vahlii*) creeper as the right place for intercourse between man and wife; but the old prejudice is fast dying out.[1]

[1] Russell and Hiralal (article, 'Gond', III, 131-2) write:—'In one part of Bastar they have a curious rule that all males, even the married, must sleep in the common house for the eight months of the open season, while their wives sleep in their own houses. A Maria Gond thinks it impious to have sexual intercourse with his wife in his house, as it would be an insult to the

[see cat. 116, p. 420. – Analyst]

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are made either of similar but lighter pole stockading, or of what the Hill Marias call *tum*, that is, fencing of grass fastened in vertical bundles between pairs of horizontal bamboo struts, which themselves are fastened at intervals to poles planted in the ground. The floors, walls and partitions are plastered with mud, the walls on the inside, and the partitions on both sides; the women do the plastering, while their men look on. They often do not plaster the veranda wall at all. They sometimes make the side walls of bamboo wattlework instead of pole stockading. They do not char or otherwise treat the bases of the poles before fixing them in the ground. The first post of the house is almost always of the sacred *saja* tree; I have not seen this adorned with bundles of thatching grass in the manner of other Gonds (cf. Russell and Hiralal, III, p. 122), but I have seen two *saja* trees near a house under construction so adorned. The youths sometimes paint the plastered partitions in white with rows of dots, with swastikas like those tattooed on girls' faces (see p. 74 above), or with crude crocodiles or tigers; I have seen women's breasts represented in relief.

The grass (rarely palm) thatch rests on bamboos tied across the roof beams, and is secured against wind by bamboos criss-crossed outside the thatch. The grass generally used is *dab* (*Pollinea argentea*) which appears in the *penda* fields after the first harvest has been reaped, and in the second or third year covers them so thickly that they have to be abandoned. In March, after the harvest has been finished, you will see near all the recently abandoned *penda* clearings extensive *dab* cuttings, the grass being stacked on rough log platforms about a foot and a half above the ground in readiness for re-thatching the houses just before the break of the monsoon. The men re-thatch houses, granaries, pig-sties and temples every year.

The usual form of door is a rectangle of split bamboo wickerwork sliding between two pairs of upright wooden posts. The doorway has often a wicker-work threshold from one to two feet high, over which the sliding door fits. There are always doors in the doorways leading from outside into the veranda, from the veranda to the *angadi*, and at the back of the menstruation room; generally also in the doorways leading into the *lonu*; but I have never seen a door in the front doorway of the menstruation room. Sometimes the whole of this room is not taboo to men, the *binda* or mud threshold that marks the limit of the tabooed ground (see p. 106) being constructed across the floor of the room some two feet beyond the front entrance. Occasionally more elaborate doors will be seen, made of a small hewn wooden plank with tangs of wood left

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342 projecting about two inches at the top and bottom of the inner edge, to work in the eyes of staples cut out of wood and fastened into the door-post; the other end has a roughly squared strip of wood six inches long, which rests in a slot in the opposite door-post and is fastened to it by a horizontal peg passing through holes in the door-post and the strip of wood.

422 The contents of the Kurmer house represented in ground-plan (b) on page 111 were typical of Hill Maria houses; the list that follows enumerates the contents only of the rooms occupied by Dedha Keye himself, his wife and children; his mother had her own property in her own *angadi* and *lonu* :—

VERANDA

1 sambar horn used as a peg.
1 *taghali* bark overcoat.
4 bundles of firewood.
[824] 1 broom of *phulbehari* (*Thysanolaena agrostis*) grass.

ANGADI

2 earthen cooking pots.
10 gourd ladles.
5 gourds for making bottles.
2 earthen pots full of drinking water.
1 bow.
2 arrows.
3 axes.
1 broken axe.
1 bamboo tobacco tube.
1 pair wooden clogs.
3 small wooden sitting stools.
4 coils of dried *siavi* bark for twisting into twine.
1 bundle of peacock's feathers, and 2 cock feathers.
4 *rahing* bamboo and leaf rain-hats.
1 *dedaʻino* leaf rain-shield for the back.
3 small iron sickles.
2 baskets of leaves for plates, etc.
29 baskets of various types, mostly empty, but some containing meal, grain and forest fruits.

MENSTRUATION ROOM

(a) *Outside the taboo limit*

2 *uspal*, or grain pestles.
2 winnows.
1 shouldered digging iron (*pulu*).
1 *gudari* hoe.
2 arrows.

(b) *Inside the taboo limit*

1 hearth.
1 cooking pot.
1 axe.
1 *uspal*.
2 gourd water-bottles.
1 *phulbehari* broom.
2 bamboo tubes of oil.
6 baskets of different sizes, used for storing food, leaves, etc., when the room is in occupation.

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in the same *padar*, and here he was able to dig a hole without any root growing across it; a few roots at the side of the hole did not matter, and the finding of a stone when the hole was half dug was considered lucky. In this hole he planted a pole of *saja* wood with a forked top, to one arm of which he had tied a bundle of thatching grass, and after filling in the hole around it with earth he sprinkled some grains of rice in two heaps in front of the pole in the name of the Village Mother, the clan-god and the local spirits. The next morning he came with the elders to inspect the two heaps of grain, and as he found them scattered about, he had to dig a fresh hole exactly as before, plant the *saja* pole in it, and lay two heaps of grain again in front of it. Next morning they found the two heaps undisturbed, and so considered that the omens favoured this as the village site. The *saja* pole was left there to serve as one of the supports for the roof-tree of the *perma's* house, and the building of the new village was begun without further ceremony. Had the heaps of grain been found again disturbed, they would have decided against that *padar* and tested the omens in the same way in another *padar*. A sacrifice to the Village Mother and the Earth (*Bhum*) had preceded the actual settling in the new site.

On page 121 are a rough sketch and ground-plan of a typical Bison-horn Maria house in the village of Telam in Kuakonda *pargana*. The inner house, consisting of the *wijja-lon* ('seed-house') in the rear, and the *narma-lon* ('middle house') in front of it, is made first; and then the *oser* ('veranda') is added, with slightly lower eaves. Though from indoors the *oser* seems just an integral part of the house, the different levels of the eaves make the house look from the outside like two card houses built on different levels. Sometimes also a second or even a third *oser* has subsequently been built on to the first, each with lower eaves, increasing still further the card house appearance. The thatch is of forest grasses or of the dwarf palms (*Phoenix sylvestris* and *Phoenix farinifera*) which are such common features of the undergrowth of the Bastar forests, and is neater than the thatch of Hill Maria houses. The doors are usually pieces of bamboo wicker-work sliding between pairs of vertical posts, like the doors of the Hill Maria houses; but sometimes the sections of wicker-work are hinged on to a doorpost by knotted pieces of split bamboo. In the richer and more advanced villages, wooden doors and padlocks are not unknown.

Houses

The *wijja-lon*, like the Hill Maria's *lonu*, is used both as a store-room and for the cult of the Departed. There being no pile granaries or long granaries, the year's harvest, not only of grain but also of forest produce, is stored in the *wijja-lon*, and so a storage platform

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the preparation of the *kaghai* site is a task to be accomplished by the whole village. Disputes are practically unknown, owing to this strong feeling of community of interest. There is, moreover, in the Abujhmar hills ample land for all, and any man is free to work harder than others if he likes to cultivate a larger plot; but he seldom does so unless he either is a newly married newcomer to the village, bent on building up a reserve of grain, or has a large number of dependents. There is no guarantee that a man will have the same plot as that allotted to him when the *kaghai* was last previously cultivated, or even a plot of the same area; but in villages where land is not so ample as in others, and a *kaghai* may be cultivated therefore at shorter intervals, each man as far as possible is allowed the same plot that he occupied at the previous cutting, though he may have to contribute a part of his former land to accommodate newcomers or newly married youths. There are villages where either the *kasyeq-gaita* or the *gaita* is a strong man and has arrogated to himself a right to allot the *penda* plots; but he would get short shrift if he were unfair in his allotting: he is not a chief, but only *primus inter pares* among the village elders.

Plots once allotted and cultivated are for the time the private property of the householder who cultivates them, and he marks the limits of his cultivation either by leaving certain tree stumps to serve as boundary marks (the Bison-horn Marias who retain permanent rights over their *penda* plots are especially careful about this, the boundary trees often being left intact and not even lopped, save in so far as necessary to keep birds off the *penda*), or by planting lines of roselle (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*) or of *til* (*Sesamum indicum*) along the edges of his plot; roselle with its crimson seed-vessels and *til* with its deep yellow blossoms make very vivid boundaries.

Each family fells its own *penda* plots, and the villagers do not combine to clear each plot in turn as they combine in threshing. The work takes two or three weeks, and the men do all the heavy work, though women and children assist in cutting small trees and undergrowth and in arranging them for firing. Any fruit trees are carefully spared. If any of the ground is dug up with *gudari* hoes, men do most of the work, though they leave it to women on the flat *dippa* lands or on the gentler *penda* slopes. The iron *pulu* digging stick is used for grubbing up roots large enough to be a serious impediment. Much timber, when the growth is heavy, is reserved for fencing the *penda* against wild animals, where any herds of deer survive. The wood is left to dry through the heat of April and May, which are holiday months.

When the wood is dry, the *kasyeq-gaita* calls a meeting in the village dormitory to fix a day for firing. All the villagers combine

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there is no need to describe their processes in this book. The potter, like the Gharwa, expects immediate payment for his goods and is not a tribal servant remunerated with a retainer of grain at harvest like the blacksmith; but he often takes payment in grain. For a Bison-horn Maria marriage, the potter will make and supply as many pots as are required, but after the marriage is paid a bullock, cow or calf for his work. 326

C. *Musical Instruments*

1. Drums

The Bison-horn Marias use the large double-membrane drums called *birya-dol*, of which typical specimens are shown in the illustrations in Plates VIII and IX. The hollow cylindrical body of these drums is a section of the trunk of a *bija* (*Pterocarpus marsupium*) or a *seona* (*Gmelina arborea*) tree up to sixteen or seventeen inches in diameter. The right hand membrane is made of goat-skin, even by those who have the goat as totem, and this is struck by the finger-tips of the open right hand. The other membrane is of cow- or bullock-hide, and this is struck with a bamboo stick carried in the left hand, and sometimes adorned at the end with a bunch of the pea-pod iron pellet-bells that are attached to the *tirdudi* bamboo dancing-sticks of their women. The membranes are stitched to each other by thongs of cow-hide criss-crossed over the outside of the wooden cylinder. That cylinder is sometimes as much as three feet long, and the weight is very considerable. The drum is slung over the right shoulder by a sling of hide or cord, sometimes adorned with cowries, and is carried obliquely across the stomach, the right end being the higher. There is no season among them when drum-beating is taboo or *melo* (their term for the Hill Maria *polo*). They have different drum rhythms for different dances, for weddings, for success in the chase, and a dactylic beat, for the drum beaten from the roof of the house to announce death; for the *pen-harsita* dance at their festival corresponding to the Hill Maria Koqsar they use the drum-stick only, and not their right hands, the rhythm being seven short beats followed by two long beats. 534 [824] [533]

These *dol* drums are occasionally found in Hill Maria villages also, but are a sign of cultural contact with the Bison-horn Marias. The essential Hill Maria drum is the single-membrane *turam* drum. The body is a wooden bowl, generally the rounded base of the hollow trunk of an exhausted *saiphi* (*Caryota urens*) tree, trimmed with the waist-knife to bowl-shape; sometimes a section of *bija* (*Pterocarpus marsupium*) trunk is similarly whittled into bowl-shape. The membrane is dried untanned cow-hide, hair outwards, and this is [824]

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755 [187] even Hindu officials educated at colleges outside the State place great trust. The cause of the illness or affliction is discovered by some form of divination (*kal hudatore*), generally by means of rice-grains, unless the case is serious enough to necessitate the actual presence of the log-god. The *waddai* always waits till he is possessed by his god (' the god comes upon him ' or ' sits on him ') to give his decision and advice. ' He gets rid of illness by ' *jhara phukna* ', blowing it away; as the sun is setting and again as it is rising he, to the accompaniment of long spells (*guni*), pretends to [824] charm a patient's illness by brushing it with a spray of leaves of *amaltas* (*Cassia fistula*), a tree with various magic uses, down from the head or the affected part to the toes, where he blows it away. The spells consist mainly of long lists of godlings; here are three specimens acquired from Telami Dhurwa, a *waddai* of Dhurli in Dantewara tahsil :—

(*a*) ' *Haranjuro, Jurjapo, Panduro-Parokhanda, Kosarabir, Bhumandra, Modarabir, Kosrapitho, Lenkjugo, Pa'inpaye, Hurremara, Ligoni, Munsputati, Munj-huro, Wirsputati, Bhimaraj, Karanje-putati, Karwaraj, Kuphkanda, Jangabela, Mudara, Yerkama, Akalharo, Mandkola, Wermar, Yekanath, Nai-taras, Mor-khanda, Netur-khanda, Gurrahom, Gõpanath, Gurja ! Widse-him.*'

This is just a catalogue of names said to be of godlings, but almost all of them unknown even to Telami Dhurwa, and ending with the adjuration ' *Widse him* ' or ' Let it go ! ', after saying which the *waddai* lets out a puff of breath from his mouth.

(*b*) ' *Dhanbawe, Arra-barra, Thakur Deo, Unasha'i, Chhewatin, Dhobin, Chandarin, Bhandarin ! Hat ke bandh* (close the hands), *tõnd ke bandh* (close the mouth), *kan ke bandh* (close the ears) ! *Guru, bandh !* (Close, oh Guru) *Guria, Telisar ! Rukh-cho rukh-jat, ban-cho ban-jat, dengur-cho dengur jat !* (literally, " Of trees, tree-kind, of forest forest-kind, of ant-hill ant-hill-kind ! ") *Kud-mon bhed-mon ilis* (You came by enmity) *Pangon mon ilis* (You came by witchcraft), *par bahar udun-ja* (but get out !).'

This is a Halbi formula, starting with names of godlings, telling them to close the hands, mouth and ears of the illness, and then ordering the illnesses of tree, forests and ant-hill to get out, whether they came through enmity or witchcraft.

(*c*) ' *Chinoni, Bisrama, Boyani, Polago, Nangoro, Idwalo, Tulwala, Kowalnago, Irpadmo, Wano-Poriya, Koyendu-Hunga, Ar-Iriya, Podemala, Ar-hunga, Deo-manda, Hurkura, Nur-Guru, Path-guru, Path-chela, Gurujan !*'

This is a meaningless jingle of words, mostly names of godlings or demons (*rau*).

000 I have not attempted here to speak of the various magico-religious ceremonies, for their magical aspect is commented on when the ceremonies themselves are described under agriculture, religion or other subjects.

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843 secluded for their first menstruation, known as the *piki-kurma-lon*; but generally speaking, Bison-horn Marias do not seem to hold in the same strength the Hill Maria fear of a woman in this condition.

844 For the birth of a child a separate hut or booth is erected in the compound, generally at the back of the house, known as the *er-nihitana-lon*, or water-washing hut. This is often little more than the roughest of booths, and considerably inferior to even a Bison-horn Maria pigsty. Here the mother remains for a full month, during which her husband is not allowed to go to his work. The delivery is assisted by an experienced woman relative or fellow-villager, who cuts and binds the navel-cord and washes the child immediately after it is born, and gives it to the mother to suckle. No food is given to the mother that day; on the next morning she is made to drink a decoction of the bark of the *kusum* tree (*Schleichera trijuga*), the root of the dwarf *chhind* palm (*Phoenix sylvestris*), and *kulthi* (*Dolichos biflorus*) pulses, pounded to a powder and boiled together, and an hour or two after this dose she is given a meal of warm boiled rice. She is dosed and fed in this way for six or seven days more, until the navel-cord falls off; and then she washes her whole body and is allowed to eat regular meals. At the 852 end of the month the *lon-wa'ina* or Returning to the House ceremony 533 takes place. The child is named with the aid of a medium, though actually names seem to be given for reasons very similar to those actuating Hill Maria choice of names. A pig, a goat or a number of cocks are killed, and the mother, having washed her clothes and her body, cooks the flesh, all the villagers and relatives being entertained to dinner. Thenceforward the mother is free to resume all her normal household and field work, and the father can resume his work.

553 I once witnessed an unusual naming ceremony. A son had been born after three elder brothers had died. It was considered 789 that their deaths had been due to the hostility of some demon or of the familiar spirit of some magician, and on the medium's advice the baby had been suspended in a rough cradle over the rubbish-heap by the fence of the *bari* garden, and all the men present threw cow-dung and filth all round the cradle, shouting out '*Kacharu*' or 'Filth!', which name was given to the child in the hope that thereby the malignant power would be deceived into thinking that the parents set no value on the child.

862 Children are breast-fed for two years or more, as among the Hill Marias. It has been already recorded (page 219) that there is among the Bison-horn Marias a special weaning ceremony during the Jata Pandum at which the first solid food given to the children is a portion of the rice and meat offered to the Departed.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

These pillars are usually erected near a highway—not necessarily a motorable one. They are usually made of the wood of *terminalia tomentosa* or *shorea robusta* and are erected with ceremonies similar to those used for a menhir.

As far as I know, the pillars are always made by non-aboriginals, but since the Marias give their instructions to the carpenters about the patterns they want carved, they do thus throw some light on Maria psychology even if they do not illustrate their sense of art. For example, the pillar in memory of Kopa Dhurwa at Massenar was made by Bharto, an Oriya carpenter of Jagdalpur. The pillars for Barse Marka at Barrem and for Marvi Masa at Jabeli were both made by Anda Kalar of Potali. For Barse Marka's pillar his sister's son gave a bull calf worth twenty rupees, cloth worth five rupees, two rupees in cash and daily rations for the fifteen days while the carpenter was working.

There was a fine pillar to a wealthy Maria named Muchaki Hunga near Dilmilli on the main road from Jagdalpur to Dantewara. It is a fat, thick pillar, carefully squared, standing some fifteen feet high with elaborate carvings round the base and a decoration of crocodiles and pigeons at the top. The whole is surmounted by a trident, obviously suggested by the carpenter, and on this again is a small bird. On the west face of the pillar there are carvings of dancers wearing bison horns and six girls who are realistically portrayed with breasts and genitalia. Below them is a tiger, a crane and a peacock. On the south side is a picture of the dead man riding an elephant, an umbrella in his hand and bags of money at the saddle. Five women follow him with pots of rice-beer and spoons. Below them are rats. At the foot are men ploughing, deer and tigers. On the east side is a man riding a horse and fish, horses and a tortoise. To the north is a man and wife with their children, a gourd for taking beer from a pot and representations of snakes and birds. Below this are two pairs of dogs apparently copulating, and at the very bottom some men are carrying a pot of rice-beer.

Near the pillar is a grave built up in the modern Hinduized fashion and protected by a little shed.

Near Massenar, at the end of a long row of *uraskal* menhirs is the pillar in memory of the famous Kopa Dhurwa. This is much more slender than the one at Dilmilli and is not so well carved. But it has carvings of Kopa himself on his elephant with the inevitable umbrella, a gun and a tobacco pouch. On his chest is a small circle which I was told represented his Jubilee Medal. The pillar is further decorated with carvings of men dancing with the bison-horn head-dress, boys and girls dancing with a pot of rice-beer, a man trying to drag away a girl by the hand, crocodiles,

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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times be of very great length. In Kuntpadar there were two measuring over 21 feet long. 226

The *dhir* is an elaborate and beautifully constructed trap, from four to eight feet long and one and a half feet high. The bamboo slats are very fine and set close together. Entrance to the trap is by a series of small doors with spiral staircases going inwards and upwards with bamboo points facing in to prevent egress. When the fish have entered—and the *dhir* is only used for the smallest creatures—they are shaken out of a small hole at the top left-hand corner. In a riddle this trap is described, '*Netānek horinta murwus tagat ke peshinta*: It goes in behind and comes out through the roof', or 'It eats with four mouths and relieves through the fifth'. 227 [524]

A special arrow with a detachable head is sometimes used (Fig. 12). The arrow-head after sticking in the fish is pulled out of its socket but remains attached to the shaft by a cord. The shaft remains as a float, and is easily recovered.

Ceremonial beats for fish are held before the eating of the new mangoes. The chelik gather poisonous leaves and roots from the forest and throw them into the water. The fish are stupefied and float to the surface and are then easily collected. They are distributed among the villagers, who eat them with the new mangoes. 226 278

Many different roots and leaves are used as fish-poison. At Phunder they gave us the names of the fruit of the mode tree, the khuni plant and kurra bark. These three are powdered, mixed together and thrown into the water. Women are not supposed to go into the water when this is done.

Before fishing the Muria invoke the Yer Kanyang (Water Maiden), asking for success and promising a token present. When the first fish is caught they say, 'Whatever ill may be, from widow, witch, from squint or evil eye, be on you'. They spit on it and throw it back into the water. If there is a very successful catch, they may sacrifice a goat or pig on the bank of the river in honour of the Water Maiden. 226 776 782

XI. Liquor

To the Muria liquor-drinking is both a duty and a pleasure. Mahua spirit is a duty because it must be offered to the gods at every festival, at the naming of a child, at a marriage, at a funeral. But the juice of the sago-palm, and even landa rice-beer (where that is taken), is only for pleasure. I will consider duty first. 273

The mahua tree is a source of food and oil as well as of liquor, and for this reason is greatly honoured. The tree, says Dalton, 'is held sacred by the Gonds, and truly no product of nature has greater claims on their gratitude'.[1] The Muria place a branch of the tree in the centre of the marriage booth; they lay the dead to rest beneath its shade; it is taboo to cut it in a clearing for shifting cultivation; as a source of alcoholic refreshment it was discovered by Lingo himself. Like the Gond and Baiga, the Muria are bound to offer it on every ceremonial occasion; the clan-god demands it, the Village Mother can never have enough, there is no better means of keeping the Departed content and quiet.[2] 273 824

In the ghotul, a donation of mahua spirit must be brought by a young boy aspiring to chelikhood; its consumption is a necessary feature of an election 273 883

[1] R. T. Dalton, *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal* (Calcutta, 1872), p. 281.
[2] The Koya put a mahua leaf in the hand of a new-born child.—Thurston, op. cit., Vol. IV, p. 52.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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THE MURIA'S LIVELIHOOD

XII. The Sago-Palm

273 137 Another very popular drink is the juice of the sago-palm, and since the Muria have developed many legends round it I will give the subject a section of its own.[1]

The sago-palm (*Caryota urens*, Linn.), which is known as *gorga marra* in Gondi and as *salpi rukh* in Halbi, is widely distributed over the greater part of the State. It is an erect monoecious tree, with axillary spadices, which sometimes grows to the height of sixty or eighty feet. Its long bipinnate leaves with their fish-tail ends are sometimes twenty feet long. The aboriginals, whether Hill Maria, Bison-horn Maria or Muria,[2] regard the trees primarily as a source of liquor, though they use the inner tissues of the stem and the wood for other purposes. The popularity of the tree is shown in the riddle, [524] 'Above sits the parrot, below is the thrashing-floor', suggesting that under the beautiful sago-palm a great crowd of people gather, and in such songs as '*Waliya uklo gorga ale mámále*—O uncle, the sago-palms are everywhere you go'. Unlike mahua spirit, however, salpi juice is not usually used in worship or on other ceremonial occasions.[3] It is rather a drink for one's private and friendly hours, though it may often supplement a failing supply of mahua at a marriage or funeral.

● 824 538 As always, legends and stories gather about anything that is intimately connected with the life of the people. There are several different accounts of the origin of the sago-palm, but all agree in connecting it with youth and gaiety. It came into being when maidens danced together or when boys pursued their loves. In the north of the State the most common legend traces its origin to an expedition of boys and girls from the house of Bhagavan, which came down to earth to dance and bathe.[4] One such party came to Chikhli village on the northernmost plateau of the State and after bathing, the girls left behind the cowrie ornaments of their hair. These ornaments are very popular among the motiari; sometimes a mass of cowries covers the whole of the back of their heads. When the girls found they had lost their ornaments they were angry and cursed the cowries saying, 'Now turn into sago-palms and we will always live with you and will never lose you again.' For this reason it is said that the cowrie is the tuft of feathers that fell from Lingo's turban. Yet again it is said that the tree was a feather stuck in the hair of a motiari which fell off as she was going to Penjori village to dance the Diwali dances, and turned into a tree when she got angry with it. But everywhere it is agreed that the tree springs up in all those places where the girls either from the house of Bhagavan or from some earthly ghotul used to go to dance. In the forests above the Raughat and all along the northern plateau there are a great many of these trees and these were the very parts where the girls went for their dancing in the dawn of the world.

There are, however, some other versions of the origin of the palm. In Mule village the Muria say that when the seven salphi maidens (Gorga Kanyang) were born they only had one placenta between them. This was cut off and

[1] For a fuller account see my article 'The Sago-Palm in Bastar State', *JRAS. Bom.*, Vol. XVIII (N.S. 1942), pp. 69–78.

[2] Grigson is not quite correct in saying that Hill and Bison-horn Maria 'almost alone in Bastar use salphi liquor'.—Grigson, op. cit., p. 224. The Muria of the north are among the most enthusiastic drinkers of salphi juice in the whole State.

[3] According to Thurston, the fermented juice is used ceremonially at marriages and festivals by the Pooja and Savara.—Thurston, op. cit., Vol. VI, pp. 216, 322.

[4] The seven heavenly damsels who came down to dance and bathe on earth is a common motif in Indian folk-tales. See Thurston, op. cit., Vol. VII, p. 100.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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buried by their mother. Almost immediately the seven sisters ran away, and when the mother could not find them, she went to the place where the placenta was buried and let the milk from her breasts fall upon it. As the days went by there gradually grew up from the placenta a tree which was full of milk. This was the sago-palm that was born from milk and always gives milk. There is a riddle—'Milk comes from the horns of the buffalo'.

Another story comes from Pharasgaon. Long ago there were eleven brothers and one day as they went hunting in the jungle they grew very thirsty. They came to a group of palm trees and rested in their shade. The youngest brother looked up at the tree and said, 'This is a very fine tree. Surely there is water hidden in its branches! I can see a pot tied there. Who can climb up and get it?' Each of the brothers tried to climb the tree and failed, for when they were nearly at the top they saw that the pot was full of blood. But the youngest boy made a rope of siari fibre and climbed up and when he looked in the pot the juice appeared to him as milk. He brought it down and they all drank of it. The ten elder brothers fell senseless but the youngest boy was intoxicated with pleasure. But he grew afraid thinking that his brothers would die. Then his god said to him, 'Offer a pig to the Gorga Kanyang and they will recover'. He sacrificed a pig and his brothers sat up again.

This is the origin of the sacrifices that are made to the tree before it is tapped. It is believed that if no offerings are made the juice turns into blood and makes the people ill. If offerings are withheld for a long time, the tree dries up.

In the Chota Dongar area, the Hill Maria of the Abujhmar and the Muria of their immediate neighbourhood trace the palm to Tallur Muttai or Mother Earth herself. At the beginning of the world, Talíur Muttai came with Kadrengal (whom some call her brother and some her husband) to the forest of Bastar. Kadrengal was innocent of sexual desire, and so Tallur Muttai created sago-palms with the hope that their juice would excite him. When Kadrengal first went to tap the trees, he tied a thread from the cut peduncle down to a hole which he dug below, but the wind blew it to and fro and the juice was scattered. Then Tallur Muttai taught him how to tie a gourd to catch the juice and place a leaf to guide it safely. Kadrengal drank a great quantity; desire came to him; and he went to Tallur Muttai.

But the Hill Maria of Jharagaon and Nalnar say that the palms originated when the seven Kanyang, daughters of Bhagavan, came down to Singardip (the world) to bathe. They combed their hair, and wherever their hairs fell the trees sprang up. They give the names of three of the Maidens of the sago-palm—Fuse Kanyang, Ganganangi Kanyang and Kondakalbuli Kanyang.

The palms are carefully guarded. Sometimes a large bamboo mat is tied round the trunk; sometimes bundles of thorns are placed to deter the thief. The owners sometimes live in little leaf-huts built below the trees in order to guard them. The tree is climbed by a long bamboo pole which hooks on to a branch at the summit. The side-shoots of the pole are not removed and these serve as the steps of the ladder. When not in use it is removed and kept in a house or in some hiding-place in the jungle. Sometimes a large loop is made at the end of the ladder and it fixes on to a bamboo hook which is tied to the tree.

This is the method of extracting the juice. The ends of the flowering spadices are cut and hollow bamboos, gourds or earthen pots are fixed where they can catch the flow of sap. Bamboos or gourds are simply tied to the tree, but a pot may be fixed in position with a couple of poles below it tied round the trunk and fixed together supported by a string tied to a bough above. The pot is placed inside a basket and its mouth tied to the spadix, to the end

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of which a folded leaf of the date palm is attached to ensure that the juice trickles down into the pot. A small gourd with a hole at either end is kept in the pot, which is finally protected with a bamboo cover to guard it from wind and birds.

When the climber has reached the pot, he removes the leaf and scrapes the end of the cut spadix with a knife that is kept among the branches. Sometimes he rubs it with a little marking-nut juice. Then he removes the sap from the pot and puts it in a gourd tied round his waist. Sometimes if the tree is very high, he lowers this gourd down to the ground with a cord. Then he replaces the leaf at the end of the spadix, puts the cover over the pot and descends.

There are various rules and customs about the use of the juice. It is not considered good to drink it when it is too sweet, as it has a laxative effect. For this reason a little of the old juice is always left in the pot to ferment it. To increase its power a little of the root of the danbaher tree is added. When the weather is cloudy it is considered that it will not be good. The juice of a newly tapped tree should not be given to a pregnant woman or she may abort. In fact, at the beginning, when a new tree is tapped only men drink. The Hill Maria do not give the juice at any time to a woman in her menstrual period.

There is a curious idea that the sago-palm itself is subject to a menstrual period.[1] Every month there is a space of two or three days during which the juice does not flow properly and it is not considered safe at this time to drink even what little there is. So, too, for the first week or so after a new tree is tapped the juice should be avoided, for it is then, they say, like semen. At Phunder, the Muria said that the end of the tree's menstrual period is indicated by the presence of a lotus leaf in the pot.

In some villages, the Muria believe that two Kanyang visit the palms. One is Jal Kanyang, and is a motiari; the other, Kaudo Kanyang, is regarded with characteristic inconsistency as a chelik. When Kaudo Kanyang comes to play in a tree, the juice is scanty but good; when Jal Kanyang comes, the juice flows like a river but it is less potent. Sometimes then a little sand and even fish are found in the pot.

This belief in the fish that get into the pot is widespread. Once in the days of Chaitu Gaita of Alor, a chelik climbed a sago-palm and found two *turu* fish and some sand at the bottom of the gourd. At Palli I was told that such fish were 'sometimes caught by the Salphi Maiden and taken up into the tree'. I have recorded the same idea among the Hill Maria.[2]

When a tree is tapped for the first time offerings are made to the Gorga Kanyang. In some villages a hollow bamboo full of water is brought from a stream and leant against the foot of the palm. It is believed that a Kanyang lives in this water and probably there is an idea that the tree will give as much juice as there is water in the bamboo. In order to improve the flow of juice the villagers sometimes promise the Gorga Kanyang a pig or a chicken.

At Adnar on the day they first tapped a new tree the village Gaita, followed by all the villagers, came to its foot. With red and black powder he made a row of three circles, inside each of which he drew a cross. Rice was piled on these crosses and two leaf-cups full of salphi juice were placed by them. One pile of rice was for the Gorga Kanyang, one for Kaudo Kanyang, and one for

[1] This idea is widespread: I have found it among Juang, Kond, Gadaba, Bondo and, in Bastar, among the Bison-horn Maria.

[2] Compare S. L. Hora, 'Rains of Fishes in India', *JRASB.*, Vol. XXIX (1933), pp. 95ff.

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245 Mother Earth. The Gaita offered eggs and chickens, first making the chickens eat the rice and then killing them. The juice in the leaf-cups was offered to the Earth Mother and the Kanyang and then everyone drank a little. After this the owner was free to tap the tree in the ordinary way.

● 824 Failure of the sago-palm may be due either to black magic and witchcraft or to the hostility of one of the Gorga Kanyang. The Kanyang, if she is not happy in a particular village, may twist the branches at the top of the tree and cause them to wither. It is generally believed that the tree gives juice for three years 'just as a girl can enjoy herself for three years protected by Lingo in the ghotul. Then she marries and the juice ceases to flow. The motiari of the palm tree is afraid of marrying too soon. If we touch the tree with a cloth yellowed by haldi it will stop giving juice till the new shoots come, for the shadow of haldi (that is, of marriage) is upon it.'

755 For gonorrhoea, a very rare disaster among these aboriginals, the sufferer stands below holding a leaf-cup into which a friend pours a little of the juice 164 from the top of the tree. The patient offers a few drops to the Gorga Kanyang and then drinks it without allowing it to touch the ground.

824 The wood of the palm is not usually used for building in Bastar but the Hill Maria make their *turam* drums out of its hollow dried-up trunk. The Muria also make combs and drum-sticks out of the dry wood. Some of the Muria in the Abujhmar foothills make necklaces of the fibre. The leaves are often used as hair-ornaments or to decorate the village dormitories. Sometimes the flowers are pounded into flour, mixed with water and drunk as a sort of gruel. When it is evident that the tree will give no more juice, it is cut down [262] and the pith is removed. This is pounded into a sort of flour and steamed in the usual way into cakes which are popular eaten with honey or sugar. This practice is common across the whole of the sago-palm country. I have found it among Hill Maria, Bondo, Gadaba, and Juang and it has been recorded for the Kadir and Khasi.[1]

273 The salphi juice is either brought back to the house and stored there until by fermentation it becomes much more intoxicating than in its fresh condition or it is drunk immediately at the foot of the tree. Little groups of people, generally men, go out to the trees, taking with them roasted crabs or frogs, little bits of chicken, various kinds of chutney, carefully wrapped in leaf-cups. The liquor is drunk from leaves, generally simply folded to make a sort of cup, and it is sometimes poured direct into the mouth. Many delightful hours are thus spent by the villagers out among the woods or on the hills.

245 When a tree is specially planted by seeds or cuttings it is very carefully tended. A fence of wood is built round it and it is watered regularly. Sometimes a tree is associated with the memory of a particular person. In Kanhargaon, a village in the Chota Dongar area, a Muria planted salphi and mango trees fifty years ago and they still preserve his memory. When the people go in the evening to drink the juice, they offer a few drops in the name of Tallur Muttai and Kadrengal to the sago-palm and a few drops in the name of the dead man who planted the trees to the mango, 'so that as we drink you can drink also'.

245 Generally speaking the tree belongs to the man in whose field or garden 423 it is growing. Where the trees are out in the jungle, or standing in the common land of the village, disputes sometimes arise. The headman or the more influential priests generally claim these trees as their own, but there is also a

[1] Thurston, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 176.; P. R. T. Gurdon, *The Khasis* (London, 1914), p. 52. See also Grigson, op. cit., p. 152.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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PERSONAL ADORNMENT AND POSSESSIONS

The Muria wash their houses with a solution of cow-dung and water. When this has dried they apply a whitewash of clean mud from the jungle. A good housewife should do this every day. The motiari must keep the ghotul spotlessly clean—'This is how she learns to keep her husband's house clean when she leaves us', explained the boys at Berma.

FIG. 91. Carved wooden blocks from Markabera used by the motiari as supports for their hair
(See p. 386)
Two-thirds actual size

Chelik and motiari wash their clothes frequently, almost as often as they bathe; the older people, naturally less concerned about their personal appearance, more anxious about economy, wash them less. The clothes are put in a pot with the ash of saja, dhaura, wesamum, siari-creeper or rice-chaff, and are boiled. When ready the pot is carried to the river, the clothes removed and washed by being beaten with the hands on a stone and rinsed again and again in the water. The clothes of a woman in her period, and especially her pubic cloth, are boiled on the river bank. At Tamragaon I saw many empty pots lying on the bank and even floating in the pools which were used for this purpose, for they cannot of course be taken back to the house.

FIG. 92. Boys' hair-retainer made by a local blacksmith out of the ribs of an old umbrella
(See p. 387)

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514 For defecation, the Muria go into the fields or jungle. Their villages are always clean of human excreta; if a child relieves itself in the house, the mother immediately cleans the place and sprinkles ash over it. One of the instructions given by Lingo in the first ghotul was that the boys and girls should never relieve themselves on the paths. Moreover since they do not wash themselves with water after defecation, the banks of streams or rivers are usually clean—in striking contrast to the horrible condition of streams near many a more 'advanced' village.

After defecation the Muria clean themselves with leaves, but they do not use siari, saja, char, sarai, tendu or karmata leaves for this. The saja is, of course, sacred; the tendu also is connected with Lingo. Sarai, karmata and siari leaves are used as leaf-plates.

A strict rule against urinating in the ghotul greatly helps to preserve its cleanliness and freshness. The rule is not, however, universal. In a few ghotul there are little holes in the wall down near the floor which are used as urinals. In others, though the children are not allowed to urinate inside the building, they may do so against the fence. Generally both boys and girls stand to urinate—a fact which gives point to the riddle: 'Shoot the arrow with all your might, yet it still falls beneath your feet.'[1]

V. Tobacco

276 In many ghotul, the distribution of tobacco is an important part of the evening ritual. As the girls go round for Johar, the Belosa and her assistant put a few pinches of finely-powdered tobacco into the chelik's hands. One of the boys has the special duty of seeing that there is a proper supply and that the girls prepare it daily.

The legendary origin of tobacco is described in a story from Kachora.

> Long ago a party of Muria went to visit the Maharaja during Dassera. On their way they came to a spot where a barren woman had been cremated. This woman had been very beautiful, but no one cared for her—for who goes to a withered tree for shelter from the sun? She complained to Nandraj and he said, 'Though they take no notice of you now, once you are dead they won't be able to get on without you.' So after her death, a beautiful plant sprung from her ashes.
>
> One of the party went to relieve himself and saw the plant. He picked a leaf and began to chew it. He found it sweet and distributed it to the others. On his way home, he went to get more leaves, but found the plant had dried. So he took the seeds and planted them in his garden. When the leaves were ready he chewed them and felt a little drunk. The feeling was so pleasant that whenever he had no leaves in his mouth he longed for them. This is why tobacco is called *surti* [after the Chhattisgarhi word *surta*, longing or remembrance].
>
> Every morning tobacco plants give off a sort of smoke because of the dew that settles on the leaves during the night. So the tobacco used in a leaf-pipe is called *dungya*, or smoke.[2]

The chelik, and still more their elders, suffer to the full this *surta*, or longing for tobacco, which they either chew or smoke in small tightly rolled leaf-

[1] The Muria ghotul is generally much less odorous than the Uraon dhumkuria I visited. A writer has described the inner room of the Ao Naga morung which is used as a urinal as 'emitting such an obnoxious smell that it makes even the second room unfit for entrance'.—S. N. Majumdar, 'The Ao Nagas', *Man in India*, Vol. IV (1924), p. 53.

[2] Cf. the Kond story on p. 308.

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CLASSIFIED GLOSSARY

Songs and Dances

buting-ting	A mask dance.
dāka	Dance-step.
endanna	Dance.
hatto	Riddle.
kahka	Proverb.
kolān mudiyāl, kolān guru, gāyān, jokta	Leaders of the Pus Kolang dances.
lakna	Theme of a song.
lang	Tune.
pār	Drum-rhythm.
pāta	Song.
pāta oywāl	Singers.
pito	Story.
roche	Chorus, generally a variation on the relo motif.

Stilt-festival

bād	Pile of old stilts placed over the stone of Bhimul.
dito	Stilts.
dito-dandi	Stilt-pole.
dito-palk	Foot-rests attached to the stilt-poles.
jabān	Wooden pegs to keep the foot-rests in place.

Synonyms

aking-making	An 'echo-word' on **aking**, leaves; meaning any kind of jungle produce.
iruh-na-yer	'Water of mahua' for liquor.
kota sāmbar	'The long-tailed one' is used for **thāli**, a cow.
moras	'A rope' is used instead of **tās**, a snake.
warreatu	'The fear' is used for **burkāl**, a tiger.

Tattooing

hale hawar (saliya dass)	Resin of *boswellia serrata* sometimes used to make the ink.
huji, uji	Needles.
jaddān perek (jāda bija)	Castor seed used to make the ink.
kājar	Black tattoo ink.
khopa (kondi or thekra)	The small pot to hold the ink.
nung neyi (tilli tel)	Oil of *sesamum indicum*, also used to make the ink.
singār katle, sujaia, dessika (H, godna)	Tattoo.

Trees, Shrubs and Creepers

ais (salai)	*Boswellia serrata*, Roxb. The Muria use the fragrant gum-resin as an incense in sacrifice.

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amarbel (Ha) — *Cuscuta reflexa*, Roxb. In Hindi, **akāshbel**, a clinging creeper used as an emblem of close friendship.

berel (bar) — The banyan, *ficus bengalensis*, Linn.

bor-renga (bhoir) — *Zizyphus jujuba*, Lamk. The Muria use its wood for fuel and sometimes to make agricultural implements. The thorny branches are used for fencing. The fleshy drupe is eaten. Hence the riddle—'The daughter is beautiful, but the mother bites'.

chil, hikum — *Acacia concinna*.

dumel bito (polai) — *Alstonia veneriata*. The bark and roots are used to poison animals.

dundipipar — A variety of *ficus religiosa*, Linn.

garānj (karanji) — *Pongamia glabra*, Vent. Oil for lighting is expressed from the seeds; the waste is used in the ghotul for massage. The fruit is rather like a comb, whence the riddle—'A tree full of combs'.

gorga (salpi) — *Carycta urens*, Linn. For a full account, see pp. 53ff.

gunj (H) — *Abrus precatorius*, Linn. The bright red seeds are used as beads and as goldsmith's weights; crushed, they poison arrows.

harangi (sargi, sal) — *Shorea robusta*, Gaertn. The splendid **sāl**, one of the most valuable of India's timber trees, used everywhere for building, railway sleepers, tools. The Muria earn money by sawing and carting the wood. They eat the seeds and young leaves and use its resin as incense.

hindi (chhind) — The wild date-palm, *phoenix sylvestris*, Roxb. The leaves are used for mats and baskets, and for marriage-crowns. The fermented sugary sap is drunk.

iru, irpu (mahua) — *Bassia latifolia*, Roxb. See p. 33.

ita (imli) — *Tamarindus indica*, Linn. The pods are used in making condiments.

jadda (aranda) — *Ricinus communis*.

kadam, kāreka (H) — *Anthocephalus cadamba*, Miq. The fruit is eaten by human beings as well as by birds and cattle.

kaka (harra) — *Terminalia chebula*, Retz. The myrabolams are used for tanning and many Muria get work collecting and preparing them for contractors.

kaner — *Nerium odorum*, the oleander, a poisonous shrub. The seeds were used to murder an unwanted husband in southern Bastar in 1940.

karandi (mokha) — *Schrebera swietenioides*, Roxb.

karāt (kāru) — *Sterculia urens*, Roxb. The ghost tree, so called because of its gaunt white trunk with branches leafless half the year.

kasi (khassi) — *Bridelia retusa*, Spreng.

kehia (dhāman) — *Grewia tilliaefolia*, Vahl. The tough elastic wood is used by the Muria for their carrying-poles and bows.

khairi, khair kuta (Ha) — *Acacia catechu*, Willd.

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kingeri (harsingri) *Nyctanthes arbor-tristis*, Linn. Widely used in medicine by the aboriginals. Buffaloes like scratching themselves against the scabrous leaves. The fragrant flowers are popular with the motiari.

koboka (bhilwan) *Semecarpus anacardium*, L.F. The marking-nut tree. The Muria eat the seeds. For the use of the juice as a counter-irritant see Codrington.

kumur (kumi) *Celastrus paniculata*, Willd.

kurru, kalmodia (kurlu) *Gardenia latifolia*, Ait. A small shrub of xerophytic habit.

kural (siuna) *Gmelina arborea*, Linn. The fruit, a succulent ovoid drupe, is eaten by chelik and motiari.

mahka (bel) *Aegle marmelos*, Correa. The tree is sacred to Hindus. The Muria use the fruit ceremonially as a substitute for the coconut.

mang (kahu) *Terminalia arjuna*, Bedd.

mard (adan, saja) *Terminalia tomentosa*, W. & A. The tree sacred to the Gond throughout central India.

marka (ām) *Mangifera indica*, Linn. The mango.

mughori (palās or pharsa) *Butea frondosa*, Roxb. The 'Flame of the Forest'. Rope is spun from its root fibres; plates and cups are made from the leaves; important in the lac industry.

nali (aonra) *Phyllanthus emblica*, Linn. The handsome wax-like fruit, which is very astringent, is valued as a stomach medicine. The leaves and branches are important demon-scarers.

samum (shisham) *Dalbergia latifolia*, Roxb. Indian rosewood.

nendi (jāmun) *Eugenia jambolana*, Lam. The black plum.

pahur (siāri) *Bauhinia vahlii*, W. & A. The camel's-foot creeper. The large leaves of this gigantic creeper are used as plates and for thatching. The Muria make rope from the fibre.

phusdar *Calotropis gigantea*, R.Br. A shrub with a milky juice.

pipi, ali (pipar) *Ficus religiosa*, Linn. The most sacred tree in India, but not specially honoured by the Muria.

reka (chār) *Buchanania lanzan*, Spreng. The fruit, which is like a plum, is coated with sugar and sold as the chironji sweet.

sumaltas (Ha) *Cassia fistula*, Linn. A beautiful tree bearing clusters of golden flowers.

hka (behera) *Terminalia belerica*, Roxb. The fruit is rapidly devoured by animals.

sāgon (Ha) *Tectona grandis*, Linn. The teak, the most important timber tree in India, famous in ship construction and for many other uses.

tirka (mākar tendu, mauju) *Diospyros embryopteris*, Pers. The fruit, which is rich in tannin, is eaten by monkeys.

toya (dumar) *Ficus glomerata*, Roxb. The wild fig.

tumir (temru, tendu) *Diospyros melanoxylon*, Roxb. The ebony tree, important in magic. The berries are a useful food.

turmura, tongondia (tilai) *Wendlandia exserta*, D.C.

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vedur (bāns) The bamboo, *dendrocalamus strictus*, Ness. The young shoots are a great delicacy. The seeds are also eaten and the pith, **vedur-jiwa** or 'soul of the bamboo', is valued.

walek (semur) *Bombax malabaricum*, D.C. The cotton tree, used ceremonially by many tribes in peninsular India.

wengor (bija) *Pterocarpus marsupium*, Roxb. The Sanskrit **asana** tree. Very important for timber. The red gum-resin is mentioned in the Lingo legend.

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female suicides prefer drowning.[1] But this is not so among the Maria. One woman preferred to hang herself even on the very banks of the Indrawati, though the deep waters of the river were at hand.

In the 50 cases of which I have detailed information, 19 suicides were committed inside a building, 16 of them inside the dwelling-place of the family. In 7 other cases death occurred near the house. In the other 24 cases the suicide took place in the jungle, a rope or cloth being attached to the branch of a tree. Among trees the mahua (*Bassia latifolia*, Roxb.) was the most popular with 6 cases, and after it the mango with 3. Otherwise there is a very great variety in the trees selected for this gloomy purpose; there do not seem to be any taboos observed, though I notice the sacred saja (*Terminalia tomentosa*, W. & A.) is not used—but this may be for the entirely practical reason that it does not have suitable overhanging branches.

The method of self-execution seems to be to climb up the tree, to attach and arrange the cord and then jump down. When the suicide occurs inside a house, the person stands on a fish-trap or basket and kicks it away. In many cases, the rope consists of the victim's own loin-cloth, turban or sari, but several different kinds of rope are also used. Rope made of the twisted siari (*Bauhinia vahlii*, W. & A.) creeper is perhaps the most common. Jute cords for tethering cattle, and ropes made of various kinds of bark are also used.

TABLE ELEVEN

Analysis of 50 Maria suicides by sex

Men	26
Women	24

The contrast between homicide and suicide in respect of the sex-ratio is very striking; 5 per cent stands against 48 per cent. There may be many reasons for this, chiefly that

[1] R. Ranchhodas and D. K. Thakore, *The Law of Crimes* (Bombay, 1911), p. 601, in the author's comment on Section 309 of the Indian Penal Code. But in the U.S.A., the order is said to be—for men—firearms, hanging, poisonous gas, corrosives, and—for women—gas, corrosives, firearms, drowning. In Japan, hanging first and then drowning are the favourite methods for both sexes.

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Maria climbing toddy tree to extract the juice

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674 her back. Then he would beat her ferociously and helped by his relatives would rub into the wounds the juice [824] of the marking-nut (*Semecarpus anacardium*, Linn.). This juice is a powerful irritant and when applied to the skin desiccates strongly, raising black blisters. Months after Mundra's death the marks of injuries were clearly visible on the unfortunate woman's body.

The last week of Mundra's life was fully occupied in chasing his wife. It appears as though he was really fond [839] of her or at least really desired her in a sadistic manner, and he probably got considerable pleasure out of torturing her. On 20 October he went with his father to Lakhopal where they had heard Pande was hiding. They sent a villager ahead to call the girl, and she came trembling out of the house and hid below a tree. Mundra and his party then forcibly took her home to Tikanpal. That same night she ran away again. On the third day Mundra set out once more in search of her. They heard that she had again gone to Lakhopal and this time, when Mundra found her, he decided not to go home but to take her to a Siraha at Killepal in order to get her exorcized of the evil spirit which, he had decided, was the real cause of her continually leaving him. This is sometimes done when a cow refuses to stay with the herd or fails to return to its own shed at night. The Siraha is called in and divines what ancestor or godling is causing the trouble, whereupon suitable remedies are adopted. Sometimes these remedies may be unpleasant, including the burning of chillies under the nose, beating with an old shoe or making the patient drink urine.[1] It is little wonder that poor Pande regarded this suggestion with alarm.

On the evening of that day a witness remembered meeting an unknown man and woman on the boundary of Kaklur

[1] How severe these remedies sometimes are may be seen in the circumstances of a case at Mandla in 1925. A Rajput youth became strange in his manner after witnessing a melodrama and his trouble was diagnosed as spirit-possession. He was first tied to a pole in the courtyard. Then his elder sister fell into a frenzy; she swallowed a live bit of coal, declared she was possessed by Kali, and sacrificed her little daughter to that goddess in an attempt to restore her brother's sanity. This remedy failing, the unfortunate youth's hands were burned and he was tied naked in a place generally used by a harmless lunatic with a local reputation for sanctity. Here he died of exposure.

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saw her dead, I wept and was very sad. I killed her by mistake. It was not from the heart'. He went on to describe how she still came to sleep with him in dreams. She, his victim, catches him by the hand and says, 'Come. Why do we stay here in this prison?'

But normally it is considered extremely dangerous to see in a dream the ghost of the person you have murdered, or to be visited by the Departed. Pandru of Chichari described how he had a dream in prison in which two people were pressing his shoulders very hard when suddenly a third man came and pushed them aside. These two people represented the Departed, and the man who pushed them away was a friendly ancestor who thus saved him from a serious illness. He said that while he was in jail three of his fellow-prisoners saw in dreams the ghosts of the men they had killed and all three died. Boti of Telam was also visited by the ghost of his victim, and as a result he was ill for a whole year. This suggests a strongly emotional element in dreams about violent crime.

This is a convenient point to refer to the very interesting dream seen by Pandru shortly before the fatal quarrel with his brother which led to murder and imprisonment. In his dream he saw an Anga clan-god and a drum and village trumpet. The clan-god stood for the corpse of the murdered man being taken out for burial and the drum and trumpet suggested that the people were weeping and mourning. In *The Muria and Their Ghotul* I suggest a close connection between the uses of the Anga clan-god and the corpse for purposes of divination. The Anga, which is carried on the shoulders by four men and in many cases resembles a bier, is a suitable harbinger of doom.

A Jailor of thirty years' experience told me that usually the Maria murderers went to their fate bravely and seldom had to be dragged or forced. They were asked to say *Ram Ram Ram* as they went to their death. The executions have a profound effect on other prisoners. Doga of Jabeli was condemned to death and was confined in a solitary cell next door to Marvi Chewa. He told me how terrified he was when Chewa was hanged, since he knew that the same fate was in store for him. All night before his execution, Doga listened to the unhappy man weeping and heard the struggle as he